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BOOK REVIEWS

The Coming Struggle in Eastern Asia. By B. L. PUTNAM WEALE.
(London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd. 1908. Pp. xiv + 640.)

B. L. Putnam Weale is the pseudonym of Mr. Bertram Lenox Simpson. He is said to be an Englishman who formerly held a position in the Chinese imperial customs service. The preface to his first work on the Eastern question implies that he is no longer in government service—a fact which enables him to write with candor—and states that he has “known his Far East since his first days.” This work, published in 1904, is entitled *Manchu and Muscovite*. Then followed in order the treatises, *The Re-shaping of the Far East* (1905), *The Truce in the East and its Aftermath* (1907), and finally the work now under review. In addition he published in 1907 a book dealing with the Boxer uprising with the title, *Indiscreet Letters from Peking*. This is a notable literary output upon a subject requiring much labor and close investigation, and of an elusive and changing nature.

In the preface to the present volume, Mr. Simpson admits that his second treatise was necessary in order to correct false prophecies in the first; that his third treatise records developments entirely different from what had been anticipated; and that now he has undertaken a “re-valuation of the old forces in the Far Eastern situation.” Near the end of the volume he frankly states that he has attempted “to measure in a few hundred pages that which cannot properly be measured at all.” This series illustrates the truth that political prophecy at its best is unreliable. The attempt, however, when preceded by an earnest effort to know the facts is always worth while. Mr. Simpson has followed this method. He presents the facts which he has collected from personal observation, from official documents, from newspapers in the Far East, and from conversations with actual participants in the moving events. The reader may therefore draw his own conclusions if he prefers to disregard the prophecies of the author.

The book consists of three parts. The first describes conditions in the Russian domain and sphere of influence east of Lake Baikal. The second is a study of Japan. The third, after indicating the internal forces that

are at work for the regeneration of China, summarizes the struggle round China, in which Japan and Russia are still engaged, and in which other great powers are necessarily involved.

The method of presentation in Part I is to describe an actual railway journey from Vladivostok to Khabarovsk and return; then west over the Chinese Eastern Railway to Lake Baikal; back to Harbin, and then south into the Japanese sphere of influence and to Port Arthur. Upon the description of this journey is hung a remarkable series of observations on the past, present and future of Asiatic Russia. Merely as a tale of travel it is thoroughly interesting reading. The most persistent impression is that made by the immense potential strength of this great country, and the enormous internal development now in progress following the recent military check to territorial expansion. If Mr. Simpson is correct, a prosecution of the Russo-Japanese war to the bitter end would have brought victory to Russia simply from force of numbers and preponderance of material resources. Russia even now is infinitely better prepared for land warfare than she has even been before, and the progress is continuous.

Part II has for its text, Japan, as the potential center of disturbance in the Far East. Her government, finances, industry, commerce and shipping, and her army and navy are separately considered. The criticism is supported by much statistical data, and first-hand information concerning the administration and methods of government. In contrast to Asiatic Russia, a tendency to overdevelopment is observed. At the same time a desire for territorial expansion causes her to neglect vital elements at home while exploiting her newly acquired territory. The "open door" in Japanese controlled territory is said to be a myth. An extraordinarily large budget with no prospect of its decrease for many years indicates an unsafe speculative tendency. Russia being no longer a sea power, the development of the Japanese navy beyond the apparent need suggests some motive that cannot yet be guessed.

Part III attempts an estimate of the possible position of affairs in China by the year 1915. The reforms in the Peking government, and in the provinces are described. The fact that since the Boxer trouble China has raised an army sufficient to police her territory unaided is evidence of a new nationalism the slogan of which is "China for the Chinese." As between Russia and Japan, the Chinese favor the Russians.

Thus many of the elements of the "coming struggle" are apparent. Russia for the present is content to strengthen the forces that she retains.

Japan is ever widening her spheres of influence. China is awakening to the danger of this encroachment. She may shortly make the demand that both Russia and Japan relinquish their control in southern Manchuria. The Japanese lease of Port Arthur expires in 1923. This alone may be sufficient to precipitate a conflict. Recurring again to the expansion policy of Japan it is asserted that her natural course of empire lies south. This is for the reasons that rice is her most essential food, that she cannot produce a sufficient quantity at home, and that the warmer southern Chinese coasts, and the southern islands are best suited for this cultivation. Expansion in this direction involves the United States in the Philippines and France in Indo China. During the life of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, complications with these powers may involve England. This alliance is thought to have been very doubtful diplomacy. For the United States, the Philippines are an element of weakness rather than of strength. They have made her a party in the Eastern question. Japan has now the naval mastery of the Pacific. The United States is the logical contestant for this mastery. In this situation, the importance of the Panama canal becomes evident. In addition the requisites for the United States are a strong navy, fortified coaling stations, and a strong Philippine army.

The final word of the book is that "a corrective is absolutely necessary in Eastern Asia in order to postpone, if not to prevent, the inevitable struggle." No conclusion is reached, however, the present time being designated as "an ominous pause, a calm before the storm."

FREDERICK CHARLES HICKS.

The Awakening of China. By W. A. P. MARTIN, D.D., LL.D. (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. 1907. Pp. x + 328.)

This volume in the Geographical Library, a series descriptive of recent geographical or political advance by persons conspicuously engaged in furthering it, is evidently designed for popular rather than scholarly consumption and is admirably well written to fulfill its purpose. Crises in the contact of western nations with China have induced so much ephemeral, hastily or ill-conceived literature from globe-trotters, war correspondents, diplomatic, consular and commercial agents or others of brief residence and limited experience in the East, that it is not only necessary but a relief to turn to the safe pilotage of such men as S. Wells Williams, Boulger, A. H. Smith, and Martin who have seen enough of